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Executive for Administration & Management

6 October 1948

Chief, Services Branch

Memorandum for the Director, CIA, from the Acting
Assistant Director, OSO, dated 29 September 1948;
Subject: Transfer of Supplies

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1. The accident referred to in the subject memorandum was first reported by telephone to the Chief, Services Branch, by [REDACTED] of the Communications Division the same afternoon the accident occurred. Immediately an investigation was ordered by the Chief, Services Branch, to determine the cause, extent of damages, and to fix responsibility for the accident. Since the subject formal report is in part contrary to our original findings, a further investigation was made on October 5. Results of both investigations are set forth below.

(1) The equipment was loaded on an open stake body truck on pallets where it could be lifted onto and off the truck by the use of a fork lift thereby minimizing the chance of it being dropped if physically handled by labor personnel. Mr. [REDACTED] the Assistant Chief of Storage and Issue Section checked the truck when loaded at [REDACTED] and although he recognized that the vehicle was heavily loaded, he felt that the load was secure. The driver had instructions not to exceed fifteen miles per hour.

(2) All drivers at the Warehouse are required to inspect their loads and if they feel that the load is not secure, they may refuse to take the vehicle out.

(3) The driver of the truck in this incident was [REDACTED] who had been assigned to duty at the warehouse two days prior to the accident. He was not informed of these instructions and accepted the load as directed. [REDACTED] states that he shifted the vehicle into low gear before proceeding over the uneven grade where the accident occurred. In passing over the grade, it appears that the load shifted and the subject equipment fell to the ground. There was no one riding on the rear of the vehicle.

(4) It should be noted that in the previous transfer of Communications supplies from the [REDACTED] Warehouse to [REDACTED] last April, it was agreed to by Mr. [REDACTED] of Communications and the Messrs. [REDACTED] of the Storage and Issue Section of the Services Branch that the practical way to handle the Communications supplies would be by loading and unloading by truck fork lifts onto open stake body trucks.

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2. Mr. [REDACTED] state that it was a clear day and I think it will suffice to say that according to the records of the U. S. Weather Bureau at the Washington National Airport, there was no rainfall recorded for the Washington area for the twenty-four hour period of 20 September 1948.

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3. Following the accident the damaged equipment was returned to the [REDACTED] Warehouse where it was inspected. Mr. [REDACTED] Chief of the Inspection and Testing Unit of the Communications Division, stated that fortunately the damages were minor and could be readily repaired with little or no expense. Mr. [REDACTED] stated to Mr. [REDACTED] of this office on Tuesday, October 5, that repairs to the [REDACTED] had been made by his shop.

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4. Mr. [REDACTED] said the repairs required to the Transmitter Blower consisted of a simple welding job on the cast iron leg which is necessary for fastening the blower to a truck or other structure. Subsequently, Mr. [REDACTED] stated to Mr. [REDACTED] that it was "a gross over statement" to say that this blower is damaged beyond repair. The blower and motor were intact and undamaged.

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5. The subject memorandum places great emphasis on the fact that this equipment was destined for use with the [REDACTED] Project. We accepted this equipment from Communications for storage at [REDACTED] as long term storage items. We have investigated as to how it happened to be turned over to us for long term storage if it was destined for the [REDACTED] Project. Although the equipment may still be used with the [REDACTED] Project, the fact remains that the subject equipment was cancelled from Cargo and returned to stock and turned over to Services for storage at the [REDACTED] as inactive stock. We do not have access to the files and records of the Communications Supply Office, however, Mr. [REDACTED] of that office reported to Mr. [REDACTED] of the Property Control Division that the [REDACTED] was cancelled from cargo shipment and returned to stock, this action being completed prior to the accident and subsequent damage.

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6. The Services Branch handled the transfer of Communications equipment and supplies from the [REDACTED] Warehouse to [REDACTED] last April. Of approximately 350 truck loads handled in this operation there was one instance of equipment being damaged. A roll of steel banding fell from a truck.

7. The seriousness of the accident is recognized and everyone concerned realizes that the damage could have been greater and of far more serious consequence. Every effort is being made to safely handle Communications supplies and equipment. To my knowledge there was never any indifference of attitude to any operation involving the transfer or handling of Communications supplies and equipment.

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